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Security Council

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New York

President:	Mr. Portas	(Portugal)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Crivano Machado
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Alzate
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Germany	Mr. Berger
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Ms. Ziade
	Nigeria	Mr. Amieyeofori
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zhukov
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2011/641)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2011/641)

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Angola, Australia, Japan, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Timor-Leste to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the members of the Council, I wish to welcome the presence at this meeting of His Excellency Mr. Zacarias Albano da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, and Her Excellency Mrs. Vera Lúcia Barrouin Crivano Machado, Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/641, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

I now give the floor to Ms. Haq.

Ms. Haq: I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to introduce the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/641) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), covering the period from 8 January to 20 September 2011. I would like to acknowledge the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. Zacarias Albano da Costa.

The report describes a calm situation in which the overall trend is positive and the country continues to make progress towards sustainable peace and development. When UNMIT was established in 2006, Timor-Leste was marked by a fragile security situation, a weak institutional framework for the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL), and thousands of internally displaced persons in camps throughout the capital.

Today, Timor-Leste is a very different place. Much has been achieved. Political leaders across the board are unequivocal about the need for continued peace, dialogue and stability. The PNTL has resumed responsibility for police operations throughout the country, and UNMIT police has intensified its focus on providing support for further institutional development and capacity-building of the PNTL. Dili is a vibrant and safe city. With the Government's Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030, there is along-term vision for the further development of the country. The electoral management bodies have significantly strengthened their capacity since 2006 and are spearheading preparations for presidential and parliamentary elections in 2012. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, including in the areas of institutional capacity-building, further strengthening of the security sector, and such socio-economic issues as youth unemployment.

President José Ramos-Horta, President of National Parliament Fernando "Lasama" de Araújo, Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, and Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente Secretary-General Mari Alkatiri deserve much credit for contributing to an environment in Timor-Leste of continued progress towards the consolidation of peace, development and stability. They and other political leaders from across the spectrum have consistently reiterated the importance of promoting tolerance, mutual respect, and commitment to the democratic process. Since the report's closing date of 20 September, I have held two of my regular meetings with all political parties, and one meeting with women party representatives. During these meetings, I have been heartened to hear party representatives describe their own responsibilities towards ensuring that this constructive political climate persists.

As the Secretary-General's report notes, good progress continues to be made in all areas of UNMIT's mandate. Let me first focus on two key elements for continued peace and stability in Timor-Leste that are

also critical aspects of UNMIT's mandated support: policing and elections.

In the area of policing, the PNTL's resumption of responsibility for the conduct, command and control of all police operations in the country on 27 March was a milestone. As I mentioned earlier, since then UNMIT police support has focused on strengthening capacity-building and training of the PNTL within the framework of the PNTL-UNMIT Police Joint Development Plan. The Plan sets out a comprehensive programme of capacity-building activities in the key areas of administration, discipline, legislation, operations and training. UNMIT police have also been providing operational support to the PNTL as required and requested, and will maintain this capacity throughout the electoral period. UNMIT police are already supporting the PNTL in preparing for the 2012 elections, including through ongoing training in the areas of operational planning and incident command and control, as well as assistance in developing a joint operations plan for elections.

A key challenge for meeting our goals in the policing area is retaining UNMIT police officers and selecting others with the expertise needed for the effective implementation of the Joint Development Plan. Here, I appeal to police-contributing countries to provide officers qualified for specialized advisory positions, and reiterate the Secretary-General's request that the countries concerned approve extensions of deployment for police officers serving in key UNMIT positions.

Since the PNTL's resumption of policing responsibilities on 27 March, PNTL officers have effectively addressed incidents, and there has been no impact on the continuing low crime rate. In the long-term, the PNTL's enduring effectiveness will depend, to a large extent, on its ability to maintain the trust of the Timorese public. As noted in the Secretary-General's report, the Office of the Secretary of State for Security completed its review of the 199 officers with pending criminal or disciplinary issues, with criminal and/or disciplinary action recommended against 121 officers. The importance of the PNTL's continuing efforts to enhance internal disciplinary mechanisms — demonstrating its commitment to transparency and the rule of law — cannot be overstated. Another essential element of maintaining trust among the population is to serve its most vulnerable members, including the victims of domestic violence, which continues to be the second highest reported crime in Timor-Leste after assault. Continued efforts to engage in community policing can assist in tackling this issue, which UNMIT continues to promote in all our work with the PNTL.

As mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, the PNTL continues to face a challenge in meeting all of its logistical requirements. I urge the Government and Parliament, including in the context of the current 2012 budget discussions, to work together to ensure adequate financial allocations for the PNTL to overcome existing logistical gaps and to maintain any assets UNMIT might eventually transfer to it. Those gaps are also being discussed in the High-level Committee on Transition, on the basis of detailed analysis of requirements and costs.

The parliamentary and presidential elections in 2012 will undoubtedly be another major milestone for Timor-Leste. Although the electoral calendar has not yet been announced, preparations are proceeding. The Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration has drafted subsidiary electoral legislation, including the rules and procedures for candidate nomination, polling and counting and campaigning, as well as codes of conduct for media, observers and party representatives, all of which are currently under review by the National Electoral Commission. United Nations support to the elections, provided through the joint UNMIT and United Nations Development Programme electoral support team, is a key example of United Nations integration in action.

I would like to highlight that, while the representation of women in Parliament — 21 out of 65 members — is already commendable, Parliament's approval of the amended parliamentary election law providing for an increase in the quota of women on party lists of candidates to one in every three reflects the widespread commitment to women's participation. To enhance women's participation in the elections, both as voters and as candidates, a national steering committee has been established, comprised of members of Parliament, the Secretariat of State for the Promotion of Equality, the electoral management bodies, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies and UNMIT. On 7 and 8 November, the steering committee hosted a national workshop, entitled "Women's leadership leads us to peace and stability", to discuss strategies to bolster women's participation in the elections.

Nevertheless, challenges remain. While women are currently playing important roles in a number of key Cabinet, State and other leadership positions, it is encouraging that multi-pronged efforts are being made by the Government and local authorities, civil society and the United Nations to increase the level of women's participation in political, electoral and other decision-making processes. During my discussions over the past months, I have appealed to all entities concerned, including State institutions and political parties in Timor-Leste, to promote women's full participation in important forums and decision-making processes that will influence the course of their country's future.

The elections are expected to be a major political event next year. I encourage international partners to again show their commitment to Timor-Leste by sending observers for the elections and by providing the financial support still needed for United Nations electoral activities to be conducted at the request of the Government.

Furthermore, the elections are widely expected to lead to a peaceful transition to a new Government in Timor-Leste, by the third quarter of 2012, with the space for meaningful engagement of an opposition. It is also expected that the PNTL will demonstrate its capacity to manage security throughout the electoral period. Based on those assumptions, and counting on continued stability, I am optimistic that conditions will allow for a smooth departure of UNMIT by 31 December 2012.

On 30 September, the Government submitted to Parliament its proposal for the 2012 State budget, in the amount of $1.76 billion, with the plenary debate beginning on 9 November and expected to conclude by 25 November. Parliament's discussions of that budget, in which all parties, including the opposition, actively participate, is yet another example of its role as a well-functioning forum for democratic debate.

As the Council knows, in July, Parliament approved the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for the period 2011 to 2030, which sets out the Government's strategies and actions to transform Timor-Leste into an upper-middle income country by 2030. As the implementation of the Plan proceeds, it will be important for public investments to promote inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth, so that all segments of the population benefit from Timor-Leste's natural resources and growth. Creating increased employment opportunities for young people will be particularly important as an indispensable contribution to long-term stability and prosperity.

Encouragingly, Timor-Leste's leaders are tackling those issues, making good progress on several of the Millennium Development Goals and redoubling attention to the targets that are currently off-track. Furthermore, through its chairmanship of the group of seven plus fragile States (g7+), Timor-Leste is at the forefront of the global policy agenda on strategies for enhancing aid effectiveness to fragile and conflict-affected states.

Finally, there have been advances in strengthening the anti-corruption infrastructure. The Anti-Corruption Commission, which became fully staffed at the beginning of this year, has proceeded to undertake investigations. Parliament also approved a law establishing the Audit Chamber of the High Administrative Tax and Audit Court, whose staff are now being trained in Lisbon.

As mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, the Commander of the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL), Major General Taur Matan Ruak, resigned on 1 September. On 6 October, President José Ramos-Horta hosted a ceremony to mark the transfer of command to newly promoted Major General Lere Anan Timur, Major General Ruak's long-term deputy. That smooth transfer of command is a promising sign for F-FDTL's continued institutional stability.

Timor-Leste has also continued to demonstrate its commitment to human rights. On 12 October, Timor-Leste's national report, which highlights the progress made and challenges faced in efforts to promote and protect human rights in the country, was adopted at the twelfth session of the working group of the United Nations Human Rights Council, under the Universal Periodic Review.

On 20 September, UNMIT launched the first public report by a peacekeeping mission on the rights of persons with disabilities, entitled "Of Course We Can". At that event, for the first time, UNMIT provided persons with disabilities information in alternative formats, including a Braille version of the report and sign language.

UNMIT's transition is well under way. On 19 September, the President, the Prime Minister and I signed a joint transition plan to guide the transition process in seven focus areas. That was the first time that a peacekeeping mission jointly established such a mechanism with a host Government. It has been a personal privilege for me to work so closely with the Timorese leadership on this ongoing matter.

As part of the transition process, the Government is proceeding with efforts to ensure that sufficient resources are dedicated to strengthening its logistical capacity in areas currently supported by UNMIT, such as aviation services. In addition, UNMIT is increasing its capacity-building activities, for both its almost 900 national staff and for various national counterparts. In the context of the transition process, joint working groups in each of the focus areas have also identified areas of support currently provided by UNMIT that should be handed over to United Nations agencies, which in turn will need to raise the financial resources required to expand their responsibilities between now and the end of next year.

The planned and orderly conclusion of a peacekeeping mission is only one aspect of a successful transition. Equally important is establishing the nature of the United Nations engagement that will be needed thereafter by the country in question, in consultation with that Government based on its priorities and requirements. As the Secretary-General has indicated in his report (S/2011/641), consultations will continue on various options for a United Nations presence in Timor-Leste following UNMIT, noting that any option would need to be discussed with the Government that will be formed following the 2012 elections.

The coming year will be an eventful one for Timor-Leste. Just like the Timorese public, UNMIT looks forward to what in Dili is sometimes called the democracy-fest that is expected in 2012. Credible and peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections would further demonstrate to the world the progress made by Timor-Leste in advancing sustainable peace and development. The elections will also be a test of the capacity of Timorese security institutions, particularly the PNTL, to ensure public safety and security across the country.

As I mentioned earlier, Timor-Leste still faces a number of long-term challenges in order to achieve its development aspirations, including in terms of enhancing institutional capacities, further strengthening the security sector and increasing human resources. In areas such as access to justice, oversight and accountability mechanisms, youth employment and health, additional support will be particularly needed. Yet, as the Secretary-General's report reflects, there are also many reasons for optimism. First and foremost among them is the determination of the Timorese people, without which none of the progress described in the report would have been possible.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Foreign Minister Da Costa, as the representative of the Government of Timor-Leste, for our excellent collaboration. I would furthermore like to thank all political parties, including the opposition, as well as civil society, for their continued collaboration. My thanks also go to all staff of UNMIT and the United Nations country team for their contribution towards our mandated efforts to support Timor-Leste.

The President: I thank Ms. Haq for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Da Costa.

Mr. Da Costa (Timor-Leste) (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): It is with great satisfaction that I return today to the Security Council to participate in this debate on Timor-Leste. The relationship of the Timorese with the United Nations dates back 36 years, to the General Assembly's adoption of its first resolution on my country, on 12 December 1975. Since then, that relationship has grown even closer and has come to include the Security Council, which has been decisive in safeguarding our sovereignty and independence. For those reasons, on behalf of the Timorese people and Government, of which I am a member, I would like first of all to thank the members of the Council profoundly and sincerely for their attention and generosity towards Timor-Leste and its people.

I would also like to mention the effort and dedication of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Her Excellency Ms. Ameerah Haq, who is present here. Her commitment has greatly contributed to the evolution of the situation in Timor-Leste and to our country's excellent relationship with the United Nations.

On 22 February, His Excellency Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão gave a speech in the Chamber (see S/PV.6485) in which he described completely and transparently the path that Timor-Leste has travelled during our Government and since the United Nations Integration Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was authorized and established under circumstances that we all know. Political and social stability, along with economic development, are a reality in our country; they are the fruit of significant public investment that has been directed to that end. The path has been long, but we have overcome many obstacles. Nonetheless, we humbly acknowledge that other, even more difficult, obstacles still lie ahead of us. We are aware of them, but it is important to note that in 2012 Timor-Leste will celebrate just 10 years since the restoration of its independence.

We also believe that the country is on a far more stable foundation than it was five years ago. We know that things overall have gone very well, but we must also recognize that highly significant steps have been taken in virtually all areas. As evidence of that, the most recent United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report* ranks Timor-Leste on its Human Development Index just five places above the last medium-development country, and above many others that have been independent for decades and have not experienced conflict.

The strong economic growth that has been registered over the past several years — including with regard to retirement, disability and old-age pensions, as well as merit compensation for former combatants, and infrastructure rehabilitation projects undertaken at the level of districts and villages — has decisively contributed to a period of social peace unprecedented since the restoration of our independence.

There has also been concrete progress in reforming the defence and security sectors, thanks to both bilateral and multilateral support. UNMIT has been a useful and valuable partner in that effort, particularly since the PNTL assumed complete responsibility for executive control of internal security, which took effect on 28 March. Since then, the PNTL has invested heavily in the training of its forces, as well as in strengthening its logistics and infrastructure in order to ensure the quality of its operational activities. Next year, we expect the Prime Minister and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Timor-Leste to grant final certification to the PNTL, which will signal the completion of that phase, which will also be affirmed during the next presidential and legislative elections.

The Government's commitment to professional training, logistics and operations for the PNTL is clearly reflected in the national budget, which allocated $20 million to that end and was approved by Parliament last week. In addition to the budget, the PNTL has strong support in this area through UNMIT's training and development programme in the context of the joint development plan signed in February, and through bilateral cooperation with Australia, New Zealand, Portugal, Japan and the United States. In addition to the reinforcements foreseen in the budget, the PNTL is also committed to recruiting 250 new members, who will begin training in January for integration into the police force in the third quarter of 2012.

Finally, with respect to professional development to ensure the excellence and professionalism of the national police, the commission for monitoring the PNTL promotions process has also focused on the area of discipline. The new disciplinary regulations, which were approved recently in the Council of Ministers and are awaiting adoption, will help fill gaps in this area, with training seminars and workshops to be conducted with the support of United Nations police. We are firmly committed to advancing the proceedings in the 199 cases of PNTL officers mentioned in the Secretary-General's report. I would like to inform the Council that 195 of the cases are under investigation or awaiting sentencing. Two were resolved through dismissal and one through exoneration.

I am very pleased to be able to say that Timor-Leste has the largest percentage of women in its police service in the entire region; this is testimony to our commitment to promoting gender equality and opportunities to participate in the social, political and economic life of our young democracy. The new election law, enacted in June, mandates a quota of one woman in every three candidates. Through its Department for the Promotion of Equality and together with civil society organizations, in partnership with UN-Women, the Government is working to maximize women's participation in the 2012 elections. I would also like to mention that the contribution of women is broadly recognized at the national level — a Timorese woman, Filomena Barros dos Reis, was recently awarded an N-Peace Award for her contribution to

peace — particularly in the border regions, through cultural exchange and capacity-building in local communities as conflict mediators and agents of peace and economic development.

With regard to human rights, Timor-Leste recently participated in October in a constructive dialogue in the Human Rights Council on its first Universal Periodic Review. I assure the Council of our full commitment to implementing the recommendations we received. We have also taken significant steps to discipline the martial arts groups that have been active outside the sporting spirit of their activities. We have enacted legislation on such groups' activities and established a code of conduct. The Secretary of State for Youth and Sports is actively promoting all measures necessary to avoid future incidents among these groups. The isolated incidents of violence that occurred in some places, such as Zumalai, are the result of old issues among the populations of neighbouring villages, involving elements connected to the martial arts groups. Through the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Government has restored normality among the affected families and concluded an investigation that resulted in the imprisonment of all the implicated parties.

Concerning the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL), we continue to consolidate that military institution. Last month, Major General Taur Matan Ruak asked to retire and passed the baton to Major General Lere Anan Timor. That in itself demonstrates the maturity that the higher command of the F-FDTL has attained with a peaceful, voluntary transfer of command of our armed forces.

The defence cooperation agreements that have been signed with New Zealand and Indonesia and are to be signed with the United States and Australia are examples of Timor-Leste's commitment to working within a new framework of relationships after the exit of the international stabilization forces. On 17 January 2012, 12 members of the armed forces will participate in a United Nations peacekeeping mission for the first time as members of the Portuguese contingent of engineers in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, and Timor-Leste begins its contribution to peacekeeping with great pride. I note that two PNTL officers are part of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau and one member of F-FDTL is a military observer in the youngest country in the world, South Sudan.

Today, Timor-Leste is unquestionably better prepared to face its future than it was five years ago. Many State institutions have been strengthened and control mechanisms established to monitor State employees' activities, including the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Audit Chamber and continued improvement in the justice sector as pillars of a more just and reliable society. The progress that has been made in these areas is of necessity for the medium and long terms, and cannot be measured in months or even years, as is also the case with the civic education of a people who lived for 24 years under oppression and violence. The traumatic consequences of those practices at all levels do not disappear of themselves overnight. We recognize that, while some issues persist, we know that they do not have the same social impact.

In that context, it is important to note that the mechanisms created have been designed to grow progressively stronger and to contribute to better Government administration. Timor-Leste is the first Asian country and only the third in the world to meet the transparency criteria of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and has created an online portal enabling free real-time access to the State's budget accounts. Social justice for the people of Timor-Leste starts with the ambitious goals for sustained development established in the Strategic Development Plan approved by Parliament. The Plan defines development directions through 2030 that involve investing in human capital, infrastructure and the economy, and in transforming Timor-Leste's economy from one essentially tied to oil into one that is non-oil-based.

We believe that 2012 will be a special year in the life of Timor-Leste and the Timorese. We will hold presidential elections in the first quarter. On 20 May, we will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the restoration of independence, and parliamentary elections may be held at the end of June. We will also celebrate the centenary of the Manufahi revolt, which took place during the Portuguese occupation of Timor, and, finally, the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the first Portuguese on the island of Timor, which we will celebrate in the enclave of Oecussi. We want our elections to take place in a climate of peace, stability and celebration. We know how important they are as determinants of the consolidation of our young democracy.

There are positive signs that political leaders on all sides will be committed to acting with mutual respect in the promotion of peace and in defence of the democratic values of liberty and tolerance. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank UNMIT, the United Nations Development Programme and bilateral partners, including Portugal, Japan, South Korea, Brazil and Mexico, for their important contributions to the success of our elections.

This climate must continue to prevail as UNMIT draws down at the end of next year. I commend the joint work that has been done in the preparation of the transition plan for UNMIT. Learning from our errors in the past, which had a grave social, economic and political impact on the country's security and stability, we must also pay special attention to monitoring the evolution of the transition based on quarterly reports submitted to the High-level Committee. As Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão noted when he signed the Plan, it is a living document that can and must be adapted from moment to moment to ensure its efficacy and full completion.

At the regional level, Timor-Leste has made major strides towards regional integration. In April, we became an observer member of the Melanesian group. We also welcomed with great satisfaction the decision taken at the recent summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Bali to consider the membership application of Timor-Leste under the criteria established in a letter from ASEAN. We welcome the commitment and the full support of Indonesia, among the various members of ASEAN, as well as the friendly nations of the region and the world, throughout the entire process of Timor-Leste's application to join that important regional organization.

We are sure that Timor-Leste will earn the confidence and trust of the countries of the region and join the great ASEAN family in a good time. We are also confident that stability and security will continue to prevail in Timor-Leste and that the coming elections will take place in an atmosphere of liberty and tranquillity and in accordance with international standards. Thus, after the elections in 2012, we will be able to begin a new phase with the gradual withdrawal of the United Nations Mission and the gradual process of integration into ASEAN.

In conclusion, I commend the members of the Security Council and thank them for their support.

The President: I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mrs. Crivano Machado (Brazil) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I welcome you, Sir, in your capacity as President of the Security Council. I reiterate Brazil's support for the Portuguese presidency and our satisfaction with the holding of this debate on Timor-Leste. I would also like to welcome Minister Zacarias Albano da Costa and express my appreciation for his presence in the Council. I thank Special Representative Ameerah Haq for her briefing and congratulate her on her leadership of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and for her efforts in support of the country.

Timor-Leste has shown a remarkable capacity to overcome the difficulties it has faced in the last decades. Today's debate gives us the opportunity to acknowledge the country's success in the course it has chosen despite the many challenges along the way. The current situation in Timor-Leste shows that those who doubted the ability of the Timorese people to progress towards political stability, security and development were mistaken.

In the security sector, we welcome the transfer of police responsibilities to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste. UNMIT's efforts in the transition and its capacity-building programmes have played an important role in consolidating national police force. The continuing calm and stability in the country are a clear sign of the success of this process. The fact that the goals to be reached by Timor-Leste are now of a socio-economic and institutional nature is a demonstration that the former challenges of conflict and instability have been overcome.

Moreover, new obstacles are already also being surpassed. Although there may still be need for progress, Timor-Leste has made its way steadily towards the necessary improvements. The country has had accelerated economic growth and laid the bases for investment and infrastructure development. Social indicators have improved significantly.

In the institutional sphere, the Timorese Government has made efforts to create mechanisms for the protection of human rights, programmes for the fight against corruption and for the promotion of transparency. These are signs of the consolidation of an

active political class and of a society that is conscious of what the country needs to move forward.

The increasing international integration of Timor-Leste — for example, its membership in the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, as well as through other initiatives, such as its drive to join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which we hope will be successful — is a springboard that will benefit not only the Timorese, but the international community as a whole. The integration of Timorese military officers into Portuguese contingents in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon demonstrates that the country is beginning to make its own contribution to the efforts of the international community.

The greatest sign of Timor-Leste's maturity is the healthy political process that is in place in preparation for the elections next year. The constructive and peaceful political debate between the Government and the opposition is exemplary. The fact that the country's third elections, to be held in 2012, coincide with the tenth anniversary celebration of the restoration of independence, is of great symbolic significance.

Brazil praises the important contribution of UNMIT to the success of Timor-Leste. The Mission has played a fundamental role in supporting the country with the tasks necessary for its progress. Brazil believes that it is important for Timor-Leste to extend the positive results obtained with UNMIT's support to such areas as transition and capacity-building. The joint transition plan is a positive measure that will allow adequate planning for the post-UNMIT period and the continuity of international cooperation in the areas in which the Timorese Government identifies a need for assistance.

Brazil has supported Timor-Leste through a large number of bilateral and trilateral cooperation projects. We will continue to work together on programmes in a broad range of areas, including agriculture, education, justice and security.

The Timorese have reason to be proud. Their successful journey has not always been the rule in similar situations. The case of Timor-Leste stands out as an example in post-conflict situations. The Timorese people and Government have been able to mobilize their efforts, with the help of UNMIT, and rediscover the way to peace and development. The international community and the Security Council must continue to support them on this path.

The President: I thank Vice-Minister Crivano Machado for her statement.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like at the outset to thank Minister Portas for his presence here today and for presiding over our meeting. I should also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. Da Costa, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Haq, for their comments.

China welcomes the fact that, during the period under review, the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, with the assistance of the international community, have made positive progress in the building of the country. We would also note that Timor-Leste, because of its fairly low point of departure in the process, still faces challenges in terms of improving living conditions and maintaining stability in the country.

I should like to focus my statement on three areas.

First, we hope that the leaders of the various Timorese parties will continue to resolve their differences through dialogue. China appreciates the efforts deployed by President Ramos-Horta and Special Representative Haq to promote dialogue between the parties, and we call on the various parties in Timor-Leste, in the interests of the people and of national unity, to endeavour to resolve any differences through communication and cooperation so as to enable the people to concentrate their efforts on building the country. We hope that the presidential and legislative elections to be held next year will provide a fresh opportunity to the people to consolidate their political stability.

Secondly, we believe that Timor-Leste should continue to strengthen its security and stability. The national police has already fully assumed its security functions. To date, the security situation has been very stable throughout the country. There have not been any serious incidents, and China welcomes this. We hope that Timor-Leste will continue to strengthen its autonomous security forces so as to ensure the security of its people. It is important to ensure that the presidential and legislative elections next year are conducted under positive conditions, in an atmosphere

of security. We hope that the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), in its remaining mandate, will train police officers as a priority in its work, in order to help them to strengthen their capacity.

Thirdly, in order to ensure lasting peace and security in Timor-Leste, the economy must be further developed and living conditions improved. China supports the efforts undertaken by the Government of Timor-Leste to develop the economy and create jobs while continuing to maintain social stability and concentrating their efforts on building infrastructure and developing human resources. China calls on the international community to continue to support Timor-Leste in its development efforts in order to ensure that it achieves sustainable development.

China very much appreciates the joint transition plan developed jointly by UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste, and we hope that the two parties will cooperate closely in the transition process. We hope that UNMIT will be able to withdraw as planned from Timor-Leste under favourable conditions so that the country can become a success story of the United Nations with regard to both the deployment of peacekeeping missions and exit strategies. China believes that, after the eventual withdrawal of UNMIT, the United Nations, in accordance with the wishes of the Government of Timor-Leste, should continue to provide it with assistance.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): Mr. President, I wish to welcome you to the Council. I wish also to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste and the Vice-Minister of Brazil. I extend my thanks to Special Representative Haq for her briefing this morning and for her dedicated leadership and commitment to solidifying peace in Timor-Leste.

The collaboration among the United Nations, bilateral partners and multilateral actors has paid dividends in Timor-Leste. The continued cooperation among all stakeholders will provide critical support as this young country develops and prospers. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/641) provides us with an important opportunity to discuss the needs of Timor-Leste, to reflect on the progress of the planned withdrawal of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), and to begin long-term planning for future United Nations engagement in the country.

Allow me to address four issues today.

First, the United States is pleased and encouraged that the security situation in Timor-Leste continues to be stable and that security sector reform efforts continue to bear fruit. The transition of primary policing responsibilities last March from UNMIT to the Timorese national police was a critical step in developing the capacity of national institutions to promote enduring security in Timor-Leste. We appreciate UNMIT's essential support to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) and recognize the PNTL's successes in strengthening its own capacity. We also acknowledge and commend the commitment of the Timorese defence forces to enhancing their professionalism and building their readiness, including their ability to respond to natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies.

Work remains to be done, however. Continued efforts to professionalize the national police and the military are necessary. We encourage the Government of Timor-Leste to focus on establishing well-defined roles for the police and the military. This is especially important as Timor-Leste moves towards elections in 2012. The United States is committed to supporting the continuing development of the military and police forces through professional exchanges, training and exercises.

Secondly, as mentioned, Timor-Leste will hold presidential and parliamentary elections in the first half of 2012. The importance of organizing and holding free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections cannot be overstated. We urge all political parties to respect the outcome of the democratic process and to conduct political activities peacefully.

The United States is pleased to support the request made by the Government of Timor-Leste for election monitors and civic and voter education programmes. We urge the international community to provide additional support to the election process.

Thirdly, I would like to reiterate the importance of Government institutions and capacity-building in Timor-Leste. The strengthening of rule of law and governance institutions is critical to the future stability of Timor-Leste. We urge continued international support for that effort. The increased participation of

women in the national police and politics is laudable and should be replicated across all institutions. Praise is also due to the Government of Timor-Leste for its progress in promoting anti-corruption and transparency initiatives, including the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission, as well as other initiatives.

We urge further work on institutionalizing Government accountability, providing access to justice and resolving truth and reconciliation issues, including the establishment of a public memory institute. Strong institutions devoted to the protection of human rights, the promotion of national prosperity and the achievement of accountability across all levels of society are critical to long-term stability in Timor-Leste.

Finally, I would like to highlight the impressive level of collaboration between UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste in developing and ratifying the joint transition plan. The plan will guide the complete withdrawal of UNMIT by the end of 2012. We encourage UNMIT and the Government to continue with its implementation consistently and systematically.

As the 2012 elections approach, the intensity of electoral preparations will increase and it may prove difficult to maintain simultaneous preparations for the eventual withdrawal of UNMIT. We urge UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste to avoid delaying the implementation of the transition plan and to continue engaging international partners to ensure that capability gaps are quickly identified and filled.

With UNMIT's withdrawal a little over a year away, we have the opportunity to think collectively about the future engagement of the United Nations, including the Security Council, in Timor-Leste. The United States believes that international support for the development of Timor-Leste will continue to be critical to the country's future. We remain committed to a sustained dialogue with the Government and other stakeholders with regard to a post-UNMIT United Nations presence in the country. The good offices of the United Nations and other international support systems will be integral to the continued development of Timor-Leste and will provide opportunities for Timor-Leste to contribute to those institutions as well.

That mutually beneficial relationship is already starting to develop. Timor-Leste has progressed from a country that needed a peacekeeping force to a country that contributes to peacekeeping forces. Timor-Leste police officers have served in overseas missions, including in Kosovo in 2005 and this year in Guinea-Bissau. In July of this year, 12 Timorese defence force engineers began a six-month training to prepare for their eventual integration into a Portuguese contingent that will serve with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

We also commend the role Timor-Leste plays as an international leader of fragile States, through its founding and sharing of the group of seven plus (g7+) post-conflict countries.

In conclusion, allow me yet again to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haq for her leadership and dedication, the peacekeepers of UNMIT for their work and contributions, Timor-Leste's other supporters on the ground and abroad and the Timorese themselves, for their continued dedication to peace and security in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Alzate (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, Mr. President, to warmly welcome you and to take this opportunity to underscore the long-standing interest your country takes in the maintenance of international peace and security in various parts of the world. Allow me also to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste and the Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil.

My delegation would like to thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), for her detailed and truly comprehensive briefing, which helps us to understand the main events in that country since the renewal of the Mission's mandate in January. We highlight her ongoing leadership and commitment, which are apparent too in the UNMIT staff. Her continued efforts to promote peace, stability and development in Timor-Leste have our full support.

We are delighted by what we have heard today. When the Security Council meets and sees progress on the issues on its agenda, we feel that the United Nations system is getting stronger and that our work has been worthwhile. This is one of those instances. We welcome the progress in peacebuilding, stability and development that we have hoped for in Timor-Leste.

In that context, we appreciate the willingness expressed by political leaders to guarantee stability during the 2012 electoral process and to maintain national unity and focus their efforts on long-term socio-economic and development strategies. There is no doubt that conducting free, transparent and peaceful elections will be a milestone for Timor-Leste. We therefore express our full support of the electoral process. We stand ready to cooperate in any way that Timor-Leste thinks would be helpful.

The interest shown by the various sectors in the country in preserving space for ongoing and broader dialogue — the "Maubisse II" initiative stands out in that regard — is the proper path to take, for it allows for an exchange of views on lessons learned and best practices in maintaining security and stability during and after next year's elections. Respectful dialogue, an outgrowth of real peace, is the path to genuine reconciliation, harmony and well-being.

It is also encouraging to learn that the Timorese police force has now taken over full responsibility for police operations throughout the country, that the rate of reported crime continues to drop and that stability has been achieved. Although the 2012 election period will be a significant challenge for the logistical capacities of the Timorese national police force, particularly in remote areas, we are nevertheless confident that they will be able to respond to the challenges that may arise. The support provided by UNMIT in those areas will be critical.

Finally, we would like to reiterate our support for the transition process being enacted by UNMIT and the Government to enable the Mission to withdraw by the end of 2012. Strengthening national capacities will enable the leaders and people of Timor-Leste to continue to move towards the achievement of common goals aimed at fomenting an inclusive model of growth that is fair and sustainable in the long term.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): My delegation expresses its appreciation to you, Mr. President, Portugal's Minister for Foreign Affairs, for presiding over this debate. We also extend our appreciation to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ameerah Haq for her briefing on the situation in Timor-Leste, to Mr. Zacarias da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, to Mrs. Vera Crivano Machado, Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, and to the Core Group for Timor-Leste for their presence at this important debate.

My delegation wishes to commend the Government and people of Timor-Leste for their continued commitment to the consolidation of peace, unity, stability and development in their country.

South Africa associates itself with the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2011/641) that the conduct of credible and peaceful elections, for the second time since the 2006 crisis, will be a critical milestone for Timor-Leste. Those elections will see the participation of the largest numbers of young people, between the ages of 17 and 24, who will be first-time voters. The successful holding of the elections will be a positive sign in efforts to consolidate democracy in Timor-Leste. In that regard, South Africa calls upon the international community to assist Timor-Leste with its preparations for the election process.

South Africa commends the work that has been and that continues to be done by the United Nations country team and the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Timor-Leste. During the period under review, the Special Representative continued to deal with, among other things, issues related to governance, accountability and broader security sector issues.

In September we received a report from Deputy Prime Minister Guterres on progress attained in the implementation of the joint strategic plans. Special Representative Haq has alluded to progress in that area with regard to the various working groups and the continued high-level engagement with the President, the Prime Minister and senior Government officials.

My delegation also welcomes the effort of the Government of Timor-Leste to develop legislation to promote the advancement of gender equality. We also welcome its efforts to promote outstanding legislation, most notably the electoral laws, as well as the 2011 State budget and the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030.

South Africa applauds the transfer of command and control of policing operations to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) and the PNTL's resumption of those operations as an important step for national law enforcement. We call upon the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to

continue supporting capacity-building and institutional development of the national police. That notwithstanding, the continuing skirmishes among martial arts and religious groups remain a source of concern. My delegation appeals to all parties to refrain from the use of violence and to instead seek peaceful means to resolve the situation.

In closing, South Africa would like to wish the Government and the people of Timor-Leste every success in the planning and preparations for the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for the first half of 2012. We are encouraged by the ongoing planning being carried out by the Government through the High-level Committee on Transition, in consultation with UNMIT, in considering how capacity-building activities can be taken forward in the post-UNMIT phase. South Africa encourages the careful calibration of drawdown after the 2012 elections, taking into account the material conditions on the ground.

We wish to express our satisfaction with the successes achieved by the United Nations in Timor-Leste. We encourage this Council to stay the remaining course and to support the country in the finalization of the transition.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Ameerah Haq, for her briefing and, more generally, for her work. I also thank Mr. Zacarias da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, for having made the trip to take part in our debate today.

France associates itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Since our last meeting, held in February (6487th meeting), and the adoption of resolution 1969 (2011), Timor-Leste has progressed on the way to stability and return to the exercise of its full sovereignty. We are impressed by the successful transfer, on 27 March, of executive power from the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL). Another source of satisfaction is the continuing low crime rate.

The political maturity shown by the leaders, the successful holding of their debates and the establishment of electoral bodies have given hope that the presidential and legislative elections slated for 2012 will be conducted in a satisfactory manner and, equally important, that the losing candidates will accept the choices made at the polls. The presence of international observers will help to bolster that credibility, if necessary. The elections will be the opportunity for the country to show that it has definitely turned the page on the 2006 crisis.

On the economic front, the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/641) quite rightly highlights the importance of the Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030, which was recently approved by Parliament.

The Security Council, in its resolution 1969 (2011), set the course for a responsible drawdown of UNMIT personnel, in tandem with a reconfiguration of its functions towards support and training. That will enable it to maintain a credible presence during the elections and ensure its rapid departure thereafter, which would then create a space for a new kind of United Nations presence.

We commend UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste on the quality of their joint transition plan to lay the groundwork for the Mission's departure. The plan is a great help in identifying the areas of cooperation that we wish to see taken up in the future.

The number of deployed UNMIT police officers was reduced from 1,480 early in January to 1,195 by the end of September. It is important that there be enough officers during the election to serve as a deterrent and to intervene if requested to do so by the authorities. Therefore, while we must consider developments in the situation on the ground, we must also have a strategic view of the pace and location of the planned adjustments, in particular during the post-electoral period.

Finally, I have a few words about the United Nations presence following the withdrawal of UNMIT. The four models identified in the report of the Secretary-General show that many approaches are possible and that each has its own merits. What is important is to begin a dialogue with the Timorese authorities following the 2012 elections so as to determine which of the models to choose.

Mr. Amieyeofori (Nigeria): I am grateful to you, Mr. President, and to the Portuguese delegation for convening this timely meeting of the Security Council on Timor-Leste. I would also like to thank Mr. Da

Costa, the Timorese Minister for Foreign Affairs, for his pertinent contributions to today's discussion. I also thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for her lucid introduction of the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/641). We appreciate her efforts and dedicated service as Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

I will limit my remarks to three important issues, namely, the political and security situation in Timor-Leste, its economic and development agenda, and its judicial and correctional systems.

Nigeria welcomes the climate of calm and stability that continues to characterize the political and security landscape of Timor-Leste. The prevailing conditions manifest the commitment of the Timorese leadership and stakeholders to sustainable peace. Indeed, the Government's initiatives on the road to peace and national unity have helped not only to foster dialogue and reconciliation, but also to facilitate the focused implementation of the national development plan.

The presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for early 2012 will be a major milestone in the peace consolidation and democratic transition processes in Timor-Leste. Under the circumstances, the importance of peaceful and credible elections cannot be overemphasized. The continuing constructive interaction between the various political parties and major stakeholders, which has guaranteed the prevailing peace, should therefore guide the conduct of the elections.

With the transfer by the United Nations of command and control of all police operations to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) on 27 March, Timor-Leste has entered a new critical phase that will determine the durability of the remarkable progress made in the security sector since 2006. The low crime rate is an indicator that the transfer is viable. Ahead of the eventual withdrawal of UNMIT, its police should continue to support the institutional strengthening, capacity-building and professionalization of the PNTL, as outlined in the PNTL-UNMIT Police Joint Development Plan, signed on 23 February.

The development of a competent and credible national military is also critical to the country's ongoing success. In that regard, we welcome the steps being taken to further strengthen the institutional and human-resource capacities of the Timor-Leste defence force, with the support of UNMIT and other United Nations and bilateral partners. A clear delineation of authority between the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste and the PNTL, under effective civilian control, would certainly help to prevent the incidence of friction between the two forces.

On socio-economic development, given the improved security, greater confidence in the country's leaders and the robust economic growth, Timor-Leste's social and economic revival is rapidly gaining traction. We laud the Government's effective and transparent use of increased budgetary resources and the promulgation of the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030. The Plan sets out an economic growth and poverty reduction strategy. In our view, if well implemented, the Plan will engender growth and accelerate the pace of development in the country. Still, there is an overarching need for the Government to sustain its investment in rural development and youth employment and to communicate its goals and programmes to the population more clearly.

On the judicial sector, Nigeria commends the Government's recent measures to strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of the justice and correctional sectors, including its adoption of the Justice Sector Strategic Plan for Timor-Leste. Such measures have undoubtedly enhanced access to justice, reduced the number of pending criminal prosecution cases and improved the prison infrastructure. To underpin the notable progress already made, the Government should emphasize combating impunity and strengthen accountability mechanisms. Furthermore, adequate steps should be taken to generate public confidence in the judicial system and to ensure respect for the independence of the judiciary.

In closing, I would like to thank the UNMIT peacekeepers, as well as the Timorese partners on the ground, for their continued dedication to peace and security in Timor-Leste. While the Timorese have made giant strides towards peace and stability, the presence and commitment of strong international partners will remain vital for sustained progress in the country.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and through you your delegation for organizing this meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Timor-Leste. We

note with appreciation that Foreign Minister Mr. Paulo Portas is here with us this morning. His presence and that of His Excellency Mr. Zacarias Albano da Costa, Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, add even more importance and standing to our debate this morning. I would also like to note with appreciation the presence of Vice-Minister Mrs. Vera Machado of Brazil. I also thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for her comprehensive briefing and for the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/641).

We are encouraged by Foreign Minister Da Costa's assessment of the situation in Timor-Leste. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the overall situation remains calm and stable and that the country is well on its path to long-term peace, stability and development. We appreciate the continued and active engagement of all political parties in the democratic processes. Such processes are essential to the consolidation of the democratic framework, as well as to the rapid socio-economic development of the country.

We are happy to note that the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) has successfully assumed responsibility for the conduct, command and control of all police operations in the country. As the transition progresses, it is necessary for the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to remain steadfast in its commitment towards the institutional development and capacity-building of the PNTL. Moving ahead, it is critical that the necessary legislative and operational framework is in place for a clear delineation of authority between the military and the police, so that they can effectively discharge their responsibilities under the civilian Government.

The presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled next year will be a major milestone in the consolidation of the democratic transition of Timor-Leste. The United Nations must provide the necessary technical and logistical support for the smooth conduct of those elections, in accordance with the priorities established by the Government.

We appreciate and fully support the efforts of the Government to enhance regional engagement and to address the developmental challenges confronting the country. We note with satisfaction that economic growth continues to remain robust and that public expenditure, including the proceeds from the oil and gas sector, has continued to be a strong driver of economic growth in the country.

India attaches great importance to its relations with Timor-Leste. We have sought to contribute to the country's development by providing expertise and training in areas where our competence would be of use and where we see complementarities in their application. India has extended its support to the Government of Timor-Leste, including through assistance for the purchase of equipment and materials related to socio-economic development and the human-resource development sector.

As UNMIT moves towards a drawdown by the end of 2012 and the Government assumes full responsibility for various processes, the United Nations system and agencies present in the field must work in a coherent manner. The joint transition plan, which sets out possible models for United Nations engagement after UNMIT's withdrawal, needs to be finalized in accordance with the priorities of the Government. The progress made so far gives us hope and confidence that we are moving in the right direction. We appreciate the efforts of UNMIT, the international community and bilateral partners towards peace, stability and development in the country.

Before I conclude, I would like to express our deep appreciation for the leadership of Special Representative Ms. Ameerah Haq and for the dedication and hard work of her team in supporting the Government and people of Timor-Leste. I am confident that we are well on the path to make UNMIT a real success story.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for her briefing and for the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/641). I welcome the presence at this debate of Their Excellencies Mr. Zacarias Albano da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, and Mrs. Vera Lucia Machado, Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of Brazil, and thank them for their statements.

In my statement, I would like to focus on democratic governance, the ongoing dialogue and the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

With regard to democratic governance, my delegation welcomes the firm commitment of the Timorese President to promote democratic values and confidence among the political leaders. I also welcome the steps taken by the Timorese Government, with a view to the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2012, to support unity, mutual respect and women's participation. On that point in particular, we are pleased to highlight the increase in the number of women on the party lists of candidates.

Furthermore, we welcome the democratic functioning of Timorese institutions, in particular the open debate within Parliament, as well as the commitment of political leaders to unity and stability. The meetings organized by Ms. Haq between the Government and the party leaders for the organization of credible elections are proof of that. It is the wish of my delegation to see the presidential elections of 2012 take place in a calm climate, with respect for the rules and interplay of democracy.

With regard to lasting dialogue, my country supports the continuation of the Maubisse initiative, to which all the players in Timor-Leste, including heads of parties and civil society, adhered in August 2010. That initiative must be institutionalized, like the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Commission of Truth and Friendship.

With respect to security, I am pleased with the calm prevailing in the country. We call for operational capacity-building in law enforcement in certain areas. We also hail the progress made in the judicial framework, particularly the first results of the legal proceedings in corruption cases. This helps strengthen confidence and the struggle against impunity and corruption.

I turn now to the mandate of UNMIT. My delegation is of the view that it has achieved significant objectives, such as reconciliation and national unity, social cohesion, security, the transfer of responsibilities for law enforcement to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste, respect for human rights, and integration of women. Social and economic development is also moving forward, and we are most pleased with this development.

Regarding that domain in particular, we encourage the implementation of the Strategic Development Plan approved by all parties, as well as of good government practices so as to stay on track and attain sustainable and integrated development in the country.

Thanks to the assistance from the international community, the Timorese people can now take in hand most of the tasks that up to now have been carried out by UNMIT. Therefore it is important to consider the period after UNMIT. In that spirit we hail the adoption by the Government and UNMIT of a joint transition plan for the transfer of responsibilities to the Timorese people. Next, Timor-Leste must present an assistance plan that will enable the Security Council to transfer the mandate to an appropriate structure that can help in areas where Timor-Leste is still in need of support.

I conclude by reiterating Gabon's support for the actions of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste. We also express our appreciation for the professionalism, dynamism and competence of Ms. Haq, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and to all her team. Their contribution is that of building a more stable, unified Timor-Leste, moving towards development prosperity. Such endeavours have become part of the history of this country.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over this debate. We thank as well the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste for being with us here today and for his very helpful briefing, and Ms. Ameerah Haq for her briefing and for all the work that she and all her colleagues in the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) have been doing and continue to do to help Timor-Leste.

The year 2012 will be pivotal for Timor-Leste and its people, who will again be asked to elect a parliament and a president. As Timor-Leste works towards these important milestones, we are pleased to note the continued stability in the security situation, as well as the country's encouraging economic growth. It is especially pleasing to note that no discernable increase in crime or disorder has resulted from the handover of full policing responsibility to the Timorese national police.

I would like to focus on three topics today. First is the nature of the United Nations presence once UNMIT has departed. Second is the role that the United Nations will be expected to play in contributing to the stability of Timor-Leste post-UNMIT. Finally, there is the withdrawal of UNMIT personnel.

We welcome the progress made in post-UNMIT transition planning, as detailed in the recently released joint transition plan. We comment the cooperation of UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste in producing a detailed document of this nature. Continuing that cooperation, the United Nations, with the Government of Timor-Leste, also needs to present a clear vision of the role that the post-UNMIT United Nations presence will play in Timor-Leste. That vision should focus on identifying priority areas of work and setting benchmarks to measure success, avoiding the United Nations commitment becoming open-ended.

In this regard we would welcome a United Nations strategic assessment of the options contained in the joint transition plan, drawing on input from the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme to help ensure the right model with the right focus.

As UNMIT prepares to depart next year, it is crucial that the Mission's withdrawal is conducted carefully and efficiently. A clearer timetable for the post-election withdrawal of UNMIT personnel needs to be articulated, along with robust contingency planning in the event of any breakdown in security or stability.

We hope the Government of Timor-Leste, for its part, and all Timorese political actors will continue to refrain from any inflammatory rhetoric as they strive for credible and peaceful elections in 2012. We also expect the Government to continue to act to prevent to impunity and to bring to justice those responsible for war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. The Government will need to ensure adequate budgetary provision for domestic policing to enable the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste to further establish itself as the primary provider of security in Timor-Leste.

Next year will present a variety of challenges for Timor-Leste and for the United Nations personnel who continue to serve there. We are grateful for all that has been achieved to date and ask the United Nations to maintain its efforts and to move towards successful completion and winding up of UNMIT and the establishment of a follow-on United Nations presence. While we hope that peace and stability will prevail in coming years, we should also take this opportunity to reassure the Government of Timor-Leste that the withdrawal of UNMIT will not mean an end of the Security Council's interest in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Barbalić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Allow me to welcome you today, Mr. President. I also wish to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. Zacarias Albano da Costa, and the Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, Mrs. Vera Lucia Barrouin Crivano Machado. My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/641) and Special Representative Ms. Ameerah Haq for her briefing today.

Bosnia and Herzegovina commends the significant progress that has been made in many important areas in Timor-Leste during the reporting period. As a young nation, Timor-Leste unquestionably faces many challenges, and every achievement demonstrates the continued commitment of Timorese leaders, political parties, civil society and the Timorese people in their quest for long-term peace, stability and development.

We reaffirm our appreciation for the vital and continued commitment of the United Nations in Timor-Leste. The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) has continued its important work, with a view to assisting the people and the Timorese Government in achieving self-sufficiency.

We believe that the resumption by the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) of primary responsibilities for the conduct and command of all police operations represents a major step in ensuring sustainable security in Timor-Leste.

With regard to the presidential and parliamentary elections to be organized in 2012, we take positive note of the progress made by the national electoral management bodies, particularly in the area of enhancing participation of women and youth in the electoral process.

As democratic transition gathers momentum, the successful organization and conduct of credible and peaceful elections will be of paramount importance. We believe that free and fair elections, as an outcome of serious preparation, will confirm that the Timorese people are moving forward in establishing a new democratic political environment and culture. For that reason, the United Nations must continue to support the electoral process, including by providing technical and logistical support as requested by the Government.

Now that the Timorese Government has fully assumed its control over all policing operations, it is imperative to ensure that the PNTL has the ability to respond to potential security challenges in the electoral period and beyond. We commend UNMIT's readiness to provide operational support to the PNTL, if required and requested during this crucial period.

As conditions improve and political stability continues, it is quite rational to start planning the transition period and the Mission's eventual departure. We endorse the Secretary-General's emphasis on the need to optimize UNMIT's effort and to focus on priority needs and activities identified jointly with the Government.

Lasting peace and stability in Timor-Leste ultimately require the full trust of the Timorese people in their politicians and confidence in the ability of the State to uphold the rule of law. In this regard, we are pleased to learn that notable progress has been made towards meeting the objectives and benchmarks of the medium-term strategy in the area of the rule of law, justice and human rights.

In order to support overall political and social transition processes, there must be sustainable development in the country. In particular, additional efforts are needed to sustain the envisaged growth by promoting rural development, infrastructure development and the role of the private sector, which should provide more employment opportunities, in particular for the young.

In conclusion, Bosnia and Herzegovina is confident that Timorese stability and social and political harmony will grow stronger in the future. The implementation of the process requires the determined commitment and cooperation of the Timorese people, Government and political parties. Bosnia and Herzegovina will support their efforts as long as is required.

Mr. Zhukov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, for his statement, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Haq, for her briefing on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

We welcome recent developments in Timor-Leste. The overall internal political trends are positive. With the assistance of the Mission, the national reconciliation process is moving forward, which is particularly important in the light of the impending 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections. The security situation is also stable. It was encouraging to see the smooth transfer in March of law enforcement responsibilities from the Mission in the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL).

Next year should be a milestone of State-building in Timor-Leste. We hope that the elections will take place calmly and that their outcome will demonstrate the lasting nature of the results achieved in that country. Next year will also be a kind of exit test for UNMIT, too. Strengthening peace in Timor-Leste and developing State institutions, including the PNTL, has called for significant efforts, the results of which have also been encouraging. We believe that the Mission should continue to guarantee stability, safeguard young institutions and, when necessary, provide operational assistance in the maintenance of law and order during the electoral process.

It is encouraging to note that the efforts of the international community in crisis resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding are producing results. The situation in Timor-Leste is a worthy example thereof. We believe, however, that any final decision on the withdrawal of UNMIT in late 2012 should be taken after the presidential and parliamentary elections have been held, taking into account the prevailing political and security situation. Arrangements of a subsequent United Nations presence in Timor-Leste must be subject to substantive discussion with the country's new Government.

Ms. Ziade (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to express our deep appreciation to you, Sir, for presiding over today's meeting. I thank Ms. Ameerah Haq for her briefing and for her work as Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). I also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste and thank him for his briefing. I further welcome Mrs. Crivano Machado, Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil.

The positive developments in Timor-Leste in the areas of political stability, security and socio-economic development have arisen as a result of the genuine desire of all political parties within the Government and the opposition to restore stability and prosperity to

their country. UNMIT has undoubtedly proved to be a success story for the international community, having contributed alongside other United Nations agencies to the consolidation of stability, the exercise of democracy and the building of State institutions. In that regard, I wish to make the following four observations.

First, Lebanon reaffirms its full support for UNMIT as it strives to complete its work before its mandate ends in late 2012. We welcome the joint transition plan signed by the President of Timor-Leste and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, which will guarantee the Mission's smooth exit.

Secondly, building security institutions will be key to consolidating sustainable security and the rule of law. In that context, we commend the role of UNMIT police in training and supporting the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) to assume its security responsibilities throughout the country. We also stress the importance of building and consolidating judicial authority and institutions in order to ensure accountability and prevent impunity.

Thirdly, we believe that the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for 2012 will be milestones in the democratic progress of the Government of Timor-Leste. We urge all political parties to contribute constructively to the preparations for the elections, and stress the importance that the PNTL be prepared to maintain security and stability during and after the electoral process.

Fourthly, we congratulate the authorities and people of Timor-Leste on the approval of the Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030, aimed at the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and at raising the country to the rank of middle-income State. We call on the younger generation of Timor-Leste, which represents the overwhelming majority of society, to participate actively in the process of rebuilding and developing its country. We welcome the effective and outstanding participation of women in the political life and State institution-building of Timor-Leste.

In conclusion, I thank the authorities of Timor-Leste for the participation of their citizens in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to friendly Portugal, which has provided training to those elements to undertake their tasks.

Mr. Berger (Germany) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation provided by the Portuguese delegation*): I would like to thank the Portuguese presidency for convening today's meeting.

(*spoke in English*)

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of Foreign Minister Zacarias da Costa in the Council today. I thank him for coming the long way to New York to report on the developments in his country. My delegation also appreciates the presence of the Portuguese Foreign Minister and the Brazilian Vice-Minister. Let me also welcome Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ameerah Haq, whom I wish to thank for her briefing and whose leadership of the Mission I again commend. Germany thanks the entire United Nations team, both in Timor-Leste and at Headquarters, for their successful contribution to the Timorese future.

Before I offer some national remarks, let me underline that my Government aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later in the debate by the observer of the European Union.

Germany takes note with satisfaction of the fact that the overall situation in Timor-Leste remains calm and stable. We share the assessment of the Timorese Government and of the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/641) that certain volatility remains but that there is reason for confidence that the Timorese institutions, in particular in the security sector, will weather the upcoming electoral and post-electoral seasons. We are also confident that continued capacity-building, if maintained at the current speed, will enable the Timorese security forces to fully meet the security needs of the country as international support is reduced. Close coordination with regard to the modalities of the drawdown of the international stabilization force will also be essential.

My delegation is encouraged by the handover of complete primary policing responsibility to the Timorese police, so far without any negative impact on the overall level of crime. However, it remains of pivotal importance to continue to ensure the highest standards that the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste committed itself to in its Joint Development Plan with United Nations police, including through adequate budgetary provisions.

Germany is confident that the remaining time prior to the elections and before the end of the transition will be used to continue to close the remaining capacity gaps, including in the management of logistics. While the strengthening of the Timorese army is also ongoing, Germany learned with appreciation that first Timorese military contribution to United Nations peacekeeping in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon is being prepared.

Against the backdrop of those encouraging developments in the security sector, we welcome the overall joint transition plan between the Timorese Government and the United Nations, which represents a true innovation. It outlines a comprehensive scenario for the drawdown of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), as well as an understanding of the national budgetary consequences. However, as my delegation pointed out here in February (see S/PV.6485), the post-UNMIT phase is fast approaching — if the current positive trends can be sustained. We note that, for the United Nations, one crucial question remains unanswered, namely, what comes after the transition. While certain fundamental decisions can only be made by the next elected Government, Germany encourages maximum attention to be dedicated to concrete planning for the post-UNMIT phase. Obviously, the Timorese Government will lead the way in that regard.

It is clear the United Nations has a long-term commitment to Timor-Leste. The joint transition plan ranks the continued fight against impunity at all levels of society and the strengthening of public confidence in the justice system among the long-term challenges. In that context, we note some progress with regard to the so-called certification of police officers who face disciplinary and criminal charges. As identified by the joint transition plan, other areas with considerable further support needs include governance and sustainable economic development. The role of women in all that can hardly be overestimated.

In conclusion, Germany would like once more to thank UNMIT for its highly committed and professional work, as well as to assure the people and Government of Timor-Leste of Germany's continued friendship and solidarity.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

(*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation provided by the Portuguese delegation*)

I would like to begin by warmly welcoming His Excellency Mr. Zacarias da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, as well as Her Excellency Mrs. Vera Lúcia Barrouin Crivano Machado, Vice-Minister of Brazil. I also wish to convey a special greeting to the non-members of the Security Council, including the delegation of Angola, whose representative will speak in its capacity as President of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and Ms. Ameerah Haq, Head of UNMIT and Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Timor-Leste, for the excellent work on the ground. I also thank all the staff and contributors to the Mission.

It is a happy coincidence that this debate is taking place during the Portuguese presidency of the Security Council one year before 2012, when, among other things, we will celebrate the tenth anniversary of Timor-Leste's independence and the fifth centennial of the encounter between the Portuguese and Timorese with the arrival of Portuguese navigators to the island.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/641) that has been presented today most appropriately highlights the progress that Timor-Leste has made during the period under review. In that regard, I would like to focus on some of its most significant aspects that provide so much hope for the future of Timor-Leste, very clearly pointing to great progress and promise. Here in the Security Council, I should like to say that Timor-Leste is a success in the history of United Nations efforts. As an Organization, we should be very proud of that success.

With regard to the security situation, we congratulate the Timorese authorities for taking over responsibility for security throughout the entire country — which the national police has done effectively and without compromising stability. We also note the positive developments in officer training and in the area of discipline.

In this pre-electoral phase, we are pleased to note the country's political stability and the increasing dialogue, and even consensus, with the opposition and civil society. I would like to emphasize improvements in public administration, the establishment of the Audit Chamber and the increased capacity to absorb

international support, both financial and in terms of human resources training. Those developments reflect growing institutional capacity and consolidation in Timor-Leste.

The efforts that Timor-Leste has made in economic planning are also noteworthy, as seen in the adoption of the strategic infrastructure construction plan for the period until 2030 and the investments in the non-oil sector of the economy, which are essential to ensuring sustainable growth for the benefit of future generations.

I would like to welcome the adoption, in September, of the joint transition plan, which is a good example of the close cooperation that exists between the Timorese Government and UNMIT. The plan is an essential component in the future re-definition of the partnership between the Government of Timor-Leste and the United Nations.

We believe that the necessary conditions are now in place for the presidential and parliamentary elections to take place in 2012, which will include 150,000 new voters and take place in accordance with recognized international standards. That will be a great opportunity for Timor-Leste to demonstrate to the world just how solid and deep its democracy is.

Portugal will extend its commitment of Portuguese police personnel in positions that UNMIT considers to be key, and calls on the other contributing countries to respond in a similar vein to the Secretary-General's request.

Portugal has been and remains committed to the exceptional framework of bilateral cooperation with Timor-Leste, with particular focus on areas that the Government has identified as priorities. In the area of justice, we are working with Timorese institutions in human resource development, and providing technical assistance in the preparation of legislation and the development of a legal lexicon in the Tetum language.

Education is another key area. During the past 10 years, we have developed technical cooperation programmes in education by sending Portuguese teachers, training Timorese teachers and providing the educational materials required to teach in both Portuguese and Tetum, the country's two official languages.

In the areas of security and defence, we have contributed to the education, training and professionalization of the armed and security forces. In that regard, we note the new technical-military dimension of the cooperation between Portugal and Timor-East, represented by the signing of two protocols in September establishing the inclusion of Timorese military personnel in Portuguese contingents taking part in United Nations and European Union peacekeeping missions. Twelve members of the defence forces of Timor-Leste are currently undergoing training in Portugal in order to be included in the Portuguese engineering company that will leave for Lebanon at the end of the year to join the ranks of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon during the first half of 2012.

In our opinion, that initiative is a good demonstration of Timor-Leste's desire to become an active member of the international community and to not shirk its responsibilities for maintaining international peace and security, which are the primary goals of the United Nations.

Timor-Leste is also a valued and active member of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), which is represented here today by a four of its members. The CPLP and its member States have also repeatedly expressed their commitment to cooperating with and assisting Timor-Leste and to contributing to strengthening the stability and consolidation of their institutions. I endorse the statement to be made by the representative of Angola on behalf of the CPLP.

We are now approaching a new phase in Timor-Leste's development as an independent State with the support of UNMIT as it makes the transition to a new and different presence in the United Nations. It is up to Timor-Leste, in dialogue with the United Nations, to decide on the format and composition of the Organization's presence in Timor-Leste after UNMIT withdraws. Portugal has absolute confidence that the transition process will unfold as planned, guaranteeing the transfer of capacities and competencies to Timorese institutions, and that it will allow the country to consolidate the work that has been carried out by the current United Nations mission.

It is never superfluous to stress — and I wish to do so on this occasion — the extraordinary progress that Timor-Leste has made since achieving its hard-won independence. The determination of the Timorese people and their leaders to overcome the greatest

challenges is today reflected in the remarkable progress that the country has made, which has earned them the international community's full confidence in their future.

I reiterate that Timor-Leste is a success story — the success of its people, of its partners, of its friends and of the United Nations — and an example of how the international community can respond to the hopes of a people and give freedom to its destiny. We know and recognize, however, that Timor-Leste still has a long way to go before achieving its legitimate aspirations with respect to economic and social development standards. It is therefore important that the international community and the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, remain firmly committed to that country. In that regard, I would like to highlight the contribution of the European Union to Timor-Leste. We align ourselves with the statement that will be made shortly by its observer.

To conclude, we look forward with optimism and confidence to developments in Timor-Leste in the year ahead. It has been 10 years since independence, but after 10 years of a resistance and a suffering unique in the history of the freedom of peoples, Timor-Leste is today a viable State under construction and a society that has embarked on the search for development. Rarely has so much been achieved in so short a time. Portugal will remain bilaterally and multilaterally at the side of Timor-Leste.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I would like to join others in welcoming Foreign Minister Portas and Foreign Minister Da Costa, both very important presences with us today, as well as Special Representative Ameerah Haq, whose contribution, together with that of her team from the United Nations Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), has remained instrumental. I would also like to thank Portugal for inviting non-Council members to participate. Australia and Portugal have actually developed a closer relationship through our joint cooperation in Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste has experienced an extended and increasingly confident period of stability over the past three and a half years, allowing the Government to turn its attention to the vital tasks of strengthening State institutions, improving service delivery to its people, building infrastructure and boosting the economy. Into the future, growing Government budgets will provide scope for greater public investment in health, education and rural development. Agriculture requires particular attention, and so of course do the employment needs of youth.

Australia welcomed the Timorese Government's decision to take a longer view of its development, which culminated in the Strategic Development Plan released in July — an appropriately ambitious vision. Australia will support the Plan's objectives through targeted assistance programmes in health, education, infrastructure, rural development and other areas.

It is widely understood, of course, that next year's national elections will test the strength of Timor-Leste's institutions, in particular the country's political parties, security institutions and electoral authorities. We have confidence in Timor-Leste's ability to run fair and transparent effective elections. We know that the Timorese people hold their democratic institutions to high account. We are impressed by the commitment of political leaders to peaceful elections and to the education of voters about their rights and responsibilities with respect to strengthening Timor-Leste's young democracy. The Maubisse dialogues, which bring Timor-Leste's political leadership, including opposition members, together, continue to reinforce to leaders of all parties that continued peace is in everybody's interests.

The election period will test the capacity of security services, in particular the police. We have to say that we have been concerned by the sporadic outbreaks of violence perpetrated by martial arts gangs. However, having said that, we are very encouraged that the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) was able to contain recent incidents, such as the violence in Zumalai in August. I note very carefully Foreign Minister Da Costa's reassuring comments on all that earlier this morning. The resumption of full policing responsibility by the PNTL in March coincided with a concentrated period of mentoring and consolidation, including focused capacity-building ahead of the election period.

My own country has provided some of the specialist trainers within the United Nations police and will continue to support the development of the PNTL

through a separate capacity-building programme. Looking ahead, adequate levels of Government budgetary support for the PNTL, as well as continuing a sustained programme of capacity-building, will be needed to ensure that it develops into a professional, resilient police force that is responsive to the community it serves. The international security forces also stands ready to provide support to Timor-Leste's security institutions and to United Nations police during the elections, if that should in fact be necessary.

As many have already said today, the performance of Timor-Leste's democratic institutions during next year's elections will indicate critical benchmarks for determining the timing of UNMIT's transition. For that and other reasons, it is important that UNMIT's mandate be extended until at least the end of 2012 to support the consolidation of a new Government.

Australia is optimistic about the conduct of next year's elections and the future development of Timor-Leste. We encourage the conditions-based approach, clearly outlined in the joint transition plan, as an ongoing guide for the approach of the Council. We acknowledge the work that the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT have put into the joint transition plan, and look forward to continued dialogue with the Government of Timor-Leste and United Nations agencies on its implementation. It will, of course, as people have said, be an evolving plan, but its innovativeness and deliberation is commendable. While the joint transition plan should prompt some preliminary discussions on a post-UNMIT United Nations presence, we agree that the nature of that presence should be guided by the views of the next Government in Timor-Leste itself. We have taken careful note of the views of political leaders that the United Nations should have an ongoing role in strengthening the foundations of Timor-Leste's democracy.

To conclude, 2012 will be a historic, landmark year for Timor-Leste. Beyond the national elections and the expected withdrawal of UNMIT, Timor-Leste will celebrate the tenth anniversary of its independence. Important challenges of course remain; we all know that. But the people of Timor-Leste have much to look forward to and are moving very much in the right direction. My own country will continue to work with Timor-Leste's Government, other partners and the United Nations to assist in this crucial transition phase and beyond.

Lastly, I would also like to commend Brazil for its work over the past two years as chair of the core group on Timor-Leste, and to welcome Vice-Minister Crivano Machado's presence today. We are very grateful to Brazil for its leadership during this period.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Nishida (Japan): I would like to begin by warmly congratulating His Excellency Mr. Paulo Portas, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal, on presiding over the Security Council today. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Zacarias Albano da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, and to thank him for his statement. I am grateful to Ms. Ameerah Haq for her briefing to the Council in her capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and for the presence here of Her Excellency Mrs. Vera Crivano Machado, Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil.

Japan shares the expectation of the international community that the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) will complete its work by the end of 2012, marking a significant historical milestone after a decade of assistance from the United Nations. As all parties concerned will agree, the highest measure of success in this undertaking will be the self-sustainability of Timor-Leste and — with due consideration given to the elements of peacebuilding — the peaceful completion of United Nations peacekeeping operations in Timor-Leste.

To achieve that end, it is essential that the two elections planned for next year be conducted smoothly and peacefully. Japan has already launched its assistance for the elections by providing a grant of approximately $1.66 million through the United Nations Development Programme, possibly to be followed by the dispatch of election observers to the country. Japan appeals to the international community to accelerate its support for a promising young country at a historic juncture.

Japan highly commends Timor-Leste's successful assumption of all responsibility for policing, and appreciates that a stable, calm situation has been

maintained ever since. The outstanding efforts being made by the Timorese national police in this regard are indispensable. At the same time, I would like to highlight the supreme importance of security during the elections. Japan calls for further improvement of the capabilities of Timor-Leste's police and armed forces, as well as for enhanced efforts by the Government and continued support from UNMIT in this area.

Democratic elections are not simply a matter of maintaining security and conducting votes. They are a process by which a people entrusts its sovereignty to its representatives. From that point of view, the fundamental role played by trust among members of society cannot be overemphasized. In order to foster a sense of trust within a society, Japan believes that its elections must be perceived as fair and transparent, that all representatives selected in those elections must be considered trustworthy, and that they are understood to be respecting the results of a democratic process. In that regard, while commending the efforts of the Government and UNMIT to ensure the technical and procedural credibility of the elections, Japan calls for the political leaders of Timor-Leste to hold democratic dialogue and to banish corruption from every sector of the country. Japan encourages the expediting of this process so that Timor-Leste can continue to develop with the precious asset of mutual trust among the members of its society.

As for the post-UNMIT discussion, Japan welcomes the joint transition plan agreed between the Government and UNMIT following extensive efforts on the part of both parties. At the same time, we are pleased to note that the plan provides for a certain degree of flexibility, allowing for modification of its details to reflect the situation on the ground. As the Secretary-General wisely points out in his report (S/2011/641), we will have to wait to see how the post-election situation on the ground develops, particularly in terms of security, before finally settling the plan.

We hope that the best decisions for the country will be arrived at through dialogue between the Government and the United Nations. While the transition process is owned by the people of Timor-Leste, Japan stands ready to deliver any form of support that the country may decide to seek from the international community. I would like to conclude by reiterating Japan's continuing commitment to consolidating the friendship between our countries and cooperating with the Timorese people in support of their nation-building efforts.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Angola.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese*): I am addressing the Council on behalf of the members of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP): Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, Timor-Leste and my own country, Angola, which is the current President of the Community.

At the outset, I would like to welcome the participation in this meeting of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, Mr. Da Costa, and of Her Excellency the Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, Mrs. Vera Crivano Machado. We are pleased to participate in this important meeting of the Security Council, which includes Brazil and Portugal as non-permanent members, dedicated to considering the situation in Timor-Leste. We also take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/641) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

It is with great pleasure that I take the floor today, in particular because we are discussing the situation in the most recent member of our Community, Timor-Leste. The situation in Timor-Leste is one scenario in which cooperation within the CPLP has proved to be important to all members of the Community concerned. We sincerely hope that the result of our joint efforts will benefit the country.

With the support of Member States, Timor-Leste and the Executive Secretariat of the CPLP have worked to establish permanent representation of the CPLP in Dili. We welcome the commitment of the Timorese authorities to this process, as demonstrated by the recent allocation of space for a representative and the funds necessary for the construction of the mission. We hope that these developments will allow for the early implementation of the CPLP strategic plan in the country, especially with respect to the promotion and dissemination of the Portuguese language as a vehicle of communication in every day work and business and towards institutional capacity-building in the areas of justice and public administration.

It is with particular satisfaction that I recall the importance of the eighth summit of CPLP Heads of State and Government, held in Luanda in 23 July 2010, where it was decided to reshape the future mandate of the CPLP permanent representation in Dili to feature a strong cultural component in favour of the use of Portuguese in Timor-Leste, in addition to the political component set forth in its original mandate. Timor-Leste's commitment to forging a strong relationship with the CPLP has also been demonstrated in its performance as the current President of the CPLP Parliamentary Assembly, and in the good results achieved at its third session, held in Dili in late September.

The States members of the CPLP remain committed to continuing the excellent cooperation with Timor-Leste with a view to strengthening its stability, consolidating its institutions and growing its economy. This process has already contributed to the growing affirmation of the country at the regional level, with benefits that support the CPLP's deepening involvement in South-East Asia and the Pacific. Coming possibly as early as 2014, the presidency of the CPLP will be another interesting challenge for Timor-Leste when it takes the helm of our Community for the first time.

In this context, the recent acceptance by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations of Timor-Leste's application for membership in that regional organization, together with the appointment of a working group to consider the accession process, is a further demonstration Timor-Leste's progress in recent years.

I also welcome Timor-Leste's first steps as a country that contributes to peace and security in the world by the integration of Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste soldiers (F-FDTL) into the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, and the dispatch of a military observer in South Sudan.

In addition, it is clear that by its example Timor-Leste has contributed to the creation of a more peaceful and secure world. I refer to the lessons learned and shared by Timor-Leste in the peaceful demobilization of veterans of the liberation struggle, in the recruitment of new soldiers, and in the new legislative framework for the integration of the F-FDTL in the professionalization of the country's defence forces, which should make all those who serve the people and democracy of Timor-Leste proud.

Timor-Leste has consistently improved its position in the human development index, as shown by the latest United Nations Development Programme report. In addition, the recently adopted National Strategic Development Plan will certainly further boost the country's strong economic growth despite the international crisis, help to modernize the country and combat poverty.

The year 2012 will be of great importance for the consolidation of Timorese democracy. The Community I represent today has complete trust in the maturity of the people and leaders of Timor-Leste as the country takes its next political steps. We are certain that the coming presidential and legislative elections will take place in an atmosphere of peace and security, reflecting the positive developments in the country in recent years.

The CPLP maintains its solidarity with Timor-Leste and has confidence in the people of that country to maintain the peace and stability, which are necessary to the economic and social development that will help Timor-Leste to contribute to increased stability and security in the region.

The President: I give the floor to the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Vrailas: I thank you, Mr. President, for giving the floor to the European Union (EU). We are honoured to participate in this important meeting of the Security Council under your leadership, Sir.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Iceland; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

As several speakers before me have stressed, the general elections in 2012 will constitute an important milestone for Timor-Leste, providing further evidence that the country is firmly set on its path to a consolidated democracy.

Let me start by congratulating Foreign Minister Zacarias Albano da Costa with the progress described in the excellent report of the Secretary-General before us (S/2011/641). We commend his Government's leadership and strong political commitment to fostering peace, unity and development.

I also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ameerah Haq for the quality and insightfulness of her briefing. The European Union commends her team's efforts in ensuring good donor coordination and in keeping development partners briefed and consulted on the joint transition plan.

The preparations of the 2012 elections are progressing in a positive manner. The constructive and responsible way in which political leaders and civil society have been interacting under the so-called Maubisse initiative is particularly encouraging and indicative of the broad commitment within Timor-Leste society to democracy and dialogue.

Beyond its ongoing assistance in the preparations of the elections, the European Union is currently examining an invitation by the Government of Timor-Leste to send an election observation mission. I can assure the Council that we are considering this request with a friendly eye. EU election observation missions can be of tremendous value, as the missions in 2002 and 2007 have shown.

The maintenance of public security and the progress made towards strengthening the security institutions, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General, are welcome developments. The successful handover of primary policing responsibilities to Timor-Leste's national police without a negative impact on the crime situation is particularly noteworthy. While commending this progress, we would like to stress that the security forces need to live up to the highest standards of professionalism and integrity. In this regard, we recognize the continued importance of a comprehensive review and reform of the entire security sector.

While recognizing the existence of potential security challenges, we are confident that the election process will be free and fair and held in a peaceful context. We welcome the continued willingness of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to provide operational support to the national police during this period, if required and requested by the Timorese authorities.

Throughout 2011, considerable progress has been made in the transition process. The joint transition plan, which places capacity-building at its core, is very welcome in this regard. The strengthening of institutional and human capacities is of great importance to a successful transition process. These activities are therefore also at the heart of the EU assistance programme.

Continued discussion of the architecture of the future United Nations presence, an important element of a sustainable transition, will be necessary. In this regard, the Timorese authorities should be decisive in the definition of the modality of a United Nations presence in the country after UNMIT.

Timor-Leste's constructive participation in the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review deserves special mention. The efforts of both the Government and non-governmental organizations are to be praised.

Timor-Leste has also made further progress towards improving accountability for past human rights violations. We firmly believe, however, that reconciliation remains an important precondition for long-term stability. The National Parliament is strongly encouraged to resume discussions on the two draft laws on a memorial institute and reparations at the earliest possible date, as well as on other steps to implement the recommendations of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation.

Timor-Leste has seen accelerated progress in many aspects of its economic and social development. At the same time, the country still faces challenges in the process of fully realizing its potential for equitable and sustainable development. In that regard, we welcome the national strategic development plan 2011-2030, as presented by the Government of Timor-Leste in July 2011. The plan represents a very valuable framework that provides guidance for coordinating and channelling our support, thus further improving aid effectiveness. We are highly committed to supporting the implementation of this plan in a spirit of partnership, mutual trust and accountability, including the increased use of reliable country systems.

The recently announced creation of an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) working group for Timorese membership in ASEAN is a significant step towards developing Timor-Leste's

closer economic, political and people-to-people ties with South-East Asia.

Allow me to end by reiterating that we have stood firmly by Timor-Leste's side in the past and will continue to do so in future. We look forward to the 2012 deliverables: successful elections and further progress in the transition process.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to Portugal and the other members of the Security Council for this opportunity to address this high-level meeting on Timor-Leste. Indeed, Mr. President, the fact that your Minister for Foreign Affairs is attending today's meeting attests to the importance of this issue.

Before I continue, allow me to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/641). I also wish to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, Zacarias Albano da Costa, for sharing with us the latest developments in his country. Lastly, I would also like to express our delegation's appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), Ameerah Haq, for her exhaustive briefing.

Since our last debate on UNMIT, in February (see S/PV.6485), we have seen improvements in the political and security situation in Timor-Leste. Since the Timor-Leste national police took control of policing responsibilities in March this year, the security environment has remained calm and stable. As a consequence, the vastly improved peace and order situation has allowed UNMIT to downsize the number of its police officers. The country, however, is still vulnerable to politically motivated violence as the 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections draw near.

The Philippines commends the great strides made by Timor-Leste in preparing itself for a post-UNMIT scenario. The joint transition plan drawn up by the Timorese Government and UNMIT is one of the most detailed and comprehensive plans ever produced for the smooth withdrawal of a United Nations peacekeeping mission, although the outcome of next year's elections will be crucial in determining whether or not that road map will be followed. But the fact that the seven focus areas have already been identified and analysed will greatly facilitate the work of UNMIT in the coming months.

The Philippine contingent to the United Nations police within UNMIT now stands, from a high of 139, at 86 police officers, 21 of whom are women, and three military advisers. The three military personnel are assisting mainly in humanitarian activities and in the investigation of incidents and violations. Five of the police officers hold key positions, while 29 serve as advisers. They have been doing an outstanding job in carrying out the mandate of the United Nations police force within UNMIT, and we are proud of their accomplishments in the security sector, particularly in the areas of community policing, training and capacity-building. In fact, although they are expected to return home in April next year, UNMIT has requested the Philippine Government to extend the tour of duty of those 34 Filipino police officers until the end of December 2012, so as to ensure the fulfilment of UNMIT's mandate.

The report of the Secretary-General underscores the recent economic growth achieved by Timor-Leste, which is largely due to the Timorese Government's excellent management of the oil industry and investment in public infrastructure. The long-term challenge is, of course, how to convert the country's oil wealth into human and physical capital in order to build a strong economy and improve the quality of life of the Timorese people. Indeed, socio-economic development will remain a priority for a young nation such as Timor-Leste even as the country consolidates the gains made in the area of political stability with a view to further deepening democracy and the rule of law.

The presidential and parliamentary elections next year will be a crucial test for the people of Timor-Leste. They will also take place after the expiration of UNMIT's present mandate. The Philippines believes that the UNMIT drawdown must be gradual and based on an objective assessment of current and anticipated requirements, especially in the light of the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. We do not want, of course, a repetition of what happened in 2007, when a premature United Nations disengagement triggered chaos and violence.

In view of the inevitable withdrawal of UNMIT, however, all stakeholders and partners concerned must work closely together to make the transition to a

post-UNMIT Timor-Leste as seamless and smooth as possible. At the same time, it provides a window of opportunity to the Government and the people of Timor-Leste to show their readiness and capacity to assume responsibility for their own peace and security.

As an active member of the Core Group for Timor-Leste and a close bilateral partner, the Philippines fully supports Timor-Leste at this crucial moment in its young history as an independent nation. As Timor-Leste marks its tenth anniversary, it is still experiencing hardship and difficulties, like many States emerging from conflict. But the Philippines is confident that Timor-Leste is in a good position to face the many challenges ahead.

At this point, Mr. President, let me once again assure you and all of our partners in the United Nations, especially the Core Group for Timor-Leste, that the Philippines will do its part to contribute to the success of UNMIT and to continue assisting the people and the Government of Timor-Leste.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States (SIDS) represented at the United Nations: Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Papua New Guinea.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over today's meeting on this important issue. I also acknowledge the welcome presence in the Council today of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. Albano da Costa, and to thank him for his briefing. The Minister's words underline his strong commitment to consolidating a peaceful transition in his country. In the same vein I would like to acknowledge the presence with us today of the Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil.

Let me also commend the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Ameerah Haq, in leading the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). We take special note of the report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste for the period from 8 January 2011 to 20 September 2011 (S/2011/641).

We, the Pacific SIDS, are pleased to note from the Secretary-General's report that since 7 January 2011 "The overall situation in Timor-Leste remained generally calm, with continued progress towards the consolidation of peace, stability and development." (*ibid., para. 2*) We further note that both individual actors, such as the party leaders of the Congresso Nacional da Reconstrução de Timor-Leste and the Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente, and institutional bodies such as the Parliament, in preparation for the 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections, have all underscored the need to sustain national unity and to concentrate on longer-term socio-economic and development strategies.

We note in particular the various initiatives and events led by His Excellency President José Ramos-Horta to support his call for "solidarity to build a society living in peace, stability, and harmony, in which women and men may have a confident outlook and hopeful future." (*see S/2011/641, para. 6*) Those initiatives reveal the President's strong political will towards national unity and stability.

We are also pleased to note that one of the most important issues under discussion at this time is the participation of women in the political process. We therefore note the important meeting convened on 14 July 2011 under the aegis of the Secretariat of State for the Promotion of Equality.

The role of UNMIT continues to be crucial in the transition, ensuring dialogue and reconciliation among the diverse political actors and civil society. Continued institutional capacity-building remains essential for Timor-Leste, especially in the context of the coming presidential and parliamentary elections in March and June 2012. The elections will represent a cornerstone for the people of Timor-Leste and will constitute a unique opportunity for the nation to secure democracy and confirm its will to develop a respectful and peaceful society.

In order for the elections to be a success, with a sustainable outcome, domestic public security remains crucial. The resumption of the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) in March 2011 proved to be an important step relating to public safety. The Pacific small island developing States appreciate the work of the UNMIT police in providing operational support to the PNTL in issues such as close protection, joint patrols and border policing. We further embrace the

reported progress in the implementation of the joint development plan, which sets out the priority areas for UNMIT police capacity-building support.

Several Pacific SIDS members have contributed actively to the progress of UNMIT by past and current deployment of police personnel. In the past, a considerable Pacific contingent served in the country, coming from Palau, Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu. At present, Samoa contributes with five policemen and policewomen and Fiji with one expert on mission. The Pacific small island developing States express their continued dedication and commitment to their active involvement in Timor-Leste.

We note with appreciation the progress of the Government of Timor-Leste in developing legislation to reinforce the security sector, for example in civil protection and border management. The Government has made notable progress towards meeting the objectives and benchmarks of the medium-term strategy in the area of the rule of law, justice and human rights. We are therefore glad to observe that Timor-Leste is showing solid progress on security and judiciary reforms.

Currently, Timor-Leste is experiencing a steady rate of economic development. We welcome the Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030, which reveals the Government's commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. UNMIT is making invaluable efforts in supporting that main national development policy by assisting the Government in planning, monitoring and coordinating donor assistance.

The Pacific small island developing States stand with Timor-Leste, which is also, we are very proud to say, a valued observer member of both the Pacific Islands Forum and the Melanesian Spearhead Group. Not only do we all share the same vulnerabilities and challenges, but we also share common values and opportunities. The Government of Timor-Leste is putting remarkable efforts into ensuring a stable, peaceful and democratic transition. Still, the quest for prosperity is a long-term journey with significant challenges ahead. The Pacific SIDS are committed to working closely with the Government of Timor-Leste in achieving its mission and reiterate their full support.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): New Zealand welcomes the presence today of Foreign Ministers Portas and Da Costa and Vice-Minister Machado, and also Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ameerah Haq, not only for her sterling work in Timor-Leste itself but also for her report here today.

That report highlights the fact that the past nine months in Timor-Leste have seen a continuation of the positive trends of recent years. The country remains largely calm and stable. Continued strong growth has enabled progress in addressing extreme poverty and extending social services. And we have seen further signs of broad commitment to a political culture based on dialogue and respect for constitutional norms.

There has also been real progress in preparing for a Timor-Leste without United Nations peacekeepers. Resumption of full policing responsibilities by the Timor police, the formal launch of the Government's Strategic Development Plan and agreement on a jointly owned transition plan have all laid foundations for a smooth transition.

New Zealand supports a conditions-based approach to UNMIT's withdrawal. Current trends suggest that we are on track for a smooth drawdown following next year's presidential and parliamentary elections and for a transition to a post-UNMIT United Nations presence by the end of 2012. Events over that year will of course determine whether that can be achieved. The coming elections will unquestionably be the sternest test since 2006 of progress in building the capacity of core State institutions.

Recent developments, however, do give us cause for optimism. Growing electoral management capability means that much less international support will be required for next year's elections. New Zealand welcomes the positive response from the United Nations to Timor-Leste's requests for targeted electoral assistance. We are also committed to providing support bilaterally. Impressive habits of restraint and respect for electoral rules and institutions have emerged, and we will soon learn whether they can withstand the intensity of high-stakes electoral competition. Timorese-led political dialogue processes, such as the retreat convened in July by the Bishop of Bacau, are playing an important role in consolidating those gains.

Assuming continuation of those positive trends, we must now focus on preparing for a smooth transition, by intensifying work to strengthen core

Timorese institutions and by concluding Mission activities or transferring them to other actors. The joint transition plan provides a comprehensive framework in that regard. We must work through that plan with key stakeholders, particularly the Timorese Government, the United Nations country team and donors, to ensure its effective and sustainable implementation. That is why we agree that the plan should remain a living document, to be adjusted as required.

Developing an integrated, "one United Nations" country strategy must also be a priority. Further strengthening the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste, particularly its logistical and operational capabilities, will also be important ahead of the expected United Nations police (UNPOL) drawdown after the 2012 elections. The PNTL-UNMIT Police Joint Development Plan is a useful blueprint in that context. We have been pleased at UNPOL efforts to recruit and retain suitable personnel for the highly specialized tasks of training and capacity-building.

Donors are also playing an increasingly important role. For example, at the Government's request, New Zealand is already scaling up assistance to the PNTL. Our police recently completed a pre-posting evaluation and preparatory visit for a bilateral programme focused on strengthening community policing, which will commence in January 2012, initially in four districts. We will continue our long-standing security partnership with Timor-Leste through a bilateral assistance programme with the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL).

Over the coming year, we must also intensify efforts to strengthen the capacities of other core State institutions, including public sector oversight and accountability bodies and the justice sector. That may also be Timor-Leste's final chance to draw on UNMIT support in addressing other long-standing challenges, such as strengthening civilian oversight of security institutions, investigating allegations of serious crimes and agreeing on support for their victims.

It is particularly important for the long-term health and legitimacy of Timor-Leste's security institutions that allegations of serious crimes against PNTL and F-FDTL officers be credibly addressed. We therefore welcome the establishment of a joint UNPOL-PNTL investigative team to process the remaining allegations against PNTL personnel.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2011/641) usefully outlines possible options for a post-UNMIT United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, and provides a good basis for further consideration of their respective implications and merits. Any decision in that regard must, of course, be based on careful assessments of Timor-Leste's post-UNMIT needs, and be determined in accordance with the priorities of the Timorese Government itself. Realistically, that means that the decision is still some way off and will be made, at the earliest, only after a Government emerges from next year's election processes.

The year 2012 should also mark a real shift in the focus of international assistance, with stronger emphasis being placed on Timor-Leste's long-term development challenges, including improving health and education and generating employment for its swelling youth population. That requires sustained growth in the non-oil private sector and particularly in agriculture.

The Government's twenty-year Strategic Development Plan, launched in July, sets out a comprehensive framework for providing international assistance in accordance with national priorities. New Zealand is seeking Timorese endorsement of a strategic framework to guide our bilateral aid programme over the next five years, and Timorese agreement on a shared vision for long-term development outcomes. The draft outcome framework contemplates assistance in three priority areas: strengthening the security and justice sectors, facilitating private-sector investment and providing education and training.

The year 2012 will be a watershed year for Timor-Leste, and a critical test of its emergence from post-conflict fragility. Should events proceed as we hope, by this time next year we may be marking UNMIT's valedictory. Credit is due to the Mission and its leadership for the progress made since the 2006 crisis. Above all, however, the people and the Government of Timor-Leste deserve praise for their courage and determination in charting their own future, and for their willingness and ability to define, for themselves, the assistance that they need. That is peacebuilding as it should be: national ownership in action.

Timor-Leste will still require the ongoing support of its friends in the region and beyond in addressing the many political and economic challenges that it will

continue to face even after UNMIT's withdrawal. For its part, New Zealand remains a proud friend and committed partner of Timor-Leste as it writes for itself the next chapter in its history.

The President: There are no further names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.